**Rwanda: Disasters - Analysis of Last 7 Years Shows Alarming Figures**

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*By Heritier Bahizi*

Rwanda has been grappling with a rising number of natural disasters in recent years, leading to devastating human and economic consequences.

The country is highly vulnerable to a wide array of natural hazards, including floods, landslides, droughts, lightning, windstorms, earthquakes, and rainstorms.

According to data from the Ministry of Emergency Management, the year 2016 witnessed a total of 625 disasters in Rwanda. These calamities resulted in 183 deaths, 172 injuries, and 2 missing persons.

The destruction of 75 houses and damage to 5,821 houses left a profound impact. Moreover, 7,449 hectares of crops were ruined, and 932 livestock perished. The most affected districts were Gakenke, Ngororero, Nyagatare, Muhanga, and Rutsiro.

In the subsequent year, 2017, Rwanda experienced 762 disasters, leading to 82 deaths, 151 injuries, and damage to 5,802 houses. Additionally, 5,277.1 hectares of crops were destroyed, and 590 livestock perished.

The districts most affected by these disasters were Gasabo, Gatsibo, Karongi, Muhanga, Rusizi, Ngoma, Gicumbi, and Gakenke.

In 2018, natural disasters claimed 254 lives, left 346 people injured, and damaged 15,910 houses. Moreover, 13,337.21 hectares of crops were destroyed, and 815 livestock perished.

Landslides, lightning, and rainstorms accounted for 235 fatalities. The districts hardest hit by these disasters were Karongi, Bugesera, Ngororero, Gasabo, Nyagatare, Rubavu, and Nyaruguru.

In 2019, the death toll reached 134, with 271 people injured and 5,691 houses damaged. Furthermore, 10,610.45 hectares of crops were ruined, and 113 livestock perished.

**Lightning strikes** and floods claimed the lives of 83 individuals. The districts most affected by these disasters were Nyamasheke, Karongi, Kirehe, Rwamagana, Ngororero, and Gisagara.

In 2020, Rwanda witnessed a staggering 2,563 disasters, resulting in 298 deaths, 414 injuries, and damage to 8,098 houses. Additionally, 4,661.5 hectares of crops were destroyed, and 3,497 livestock perished.

Rainstorms, landslides, and floods were responsible for 232 fatalities. The most affected districts were Nyabihu, Ngororero, Muhanga, Gasabo, and Gakenke.

In 2021, 116 deaths occurred, with 248 injuries and damage to 4,808 houses. 3,802.29 hectares of crops were ruined, and 2,140 livestock perished.

**Lightning strikes** and rainstorms accounted for 104 fatalities. The districts most affected were Burera, Rubavu, Nyagatare, Kirehe, Ngoma, and Gicumbi.

In 2022, 205 deaths were recorded, along with 401 injuries and damage to 4,156 houses. Moreover, 1,917.7425 hectares of crops were ruined, and 201 livestock perished.

Floods, rainstorms, mine disasters, lightnings, and landslides took 197 lives last year. The most affected districts were Burera, Nyamasheke, Kamonyi, Muhanga, Nyaruguru, Rulindo, and Rutsiro.

According to a report released by Rwanda's Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) in 2023, disasters claimed the lives of more than 60 people in the country from January to April 20, 2023. In this period, there were at least 408 disaster cases recorded.

These included 107 windstorm cases, 66 rainstorms, three mine disasters, **77 lightning cases**, seven landslides, 13 house collapses, eight hailstorms, 29 floods, and 98 fires. As a result of these disasters, 158 people were injured, 1,205 houses were damaged, 600 hectares of crops were destroyed, and 368 livestock were lost.

Although the annual Disaster Effects Report has not yet been released, Rwanda has already experienced its biggest single disaster in the past seven years. Flooding and landslides hit the Northern, Western, and Southern provinces on May 2 and 3, affecting districts such as Ngororero, Rubavu, Nyabihu, Rutsiro, and Karongi.

According to data from MINEMA, the flood and landslide-induced disasters on May 2 and 3 resulted in the loss of 131 lives and the destruction of more than 5,000 houses in the Northern, Western, and Southern provinces.